

University of Hawai'i

LEEWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

September 6, 2006

To: Department of Transportation Services
City and County of Honolulu
650 South King Street, 3rd Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813
Attn: Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project

Subject: Transit Plans and Leeward Community College

Leeward Community College has reviewed the four various Transit Alternative Analysis proposals that have been presented at the Community Update forums. We want to thank you for reaching out to the communities and presenting the transportation options that are currently under consideration. We encourage you, Mayor Hanneman, and the Honolulu City Council to continue working toward a multi-modal transportation solution that addresses the long-term needs of all Island residents. In our view, any multi-modal solution in an urban setting should include a fixed guideway (light rail) transportation option.

Insofar as Leeward Community College is concerned, we do believe that traffic congestion solutions include the offering of frequent, convenient, and alternative transportation services to our students and employees. This can take the shape and form of alternative transportation options including, but not limited to, improved vehicular and pedestrian access to campus, expanded bicycle lanes, more frequent bus transportation, and fixed guideway. As a campus that numbers in excess of 6,000 students, providing much needed relief for campus ingress and egress should be given a very high priority. Additionally, the College is host to a number of community and church groups and other social, entertainment, and special events. Our theatre performances alone draw in excess of 100,000 patrons per year. Providing alternative means of attending these events would be well received by the local and surrounding communities. Additionally, any solution that seeks to help alleviate the traffic bottleneck that occurs multiple times per day at the H1/H2/Kamehameha/Farrington highways should also be given your utmost consideration.

As current plans indicate, Alternative Four (Fixed Guideway) does have a transit stop located on the Ewa side of the Leeward Community College campus. We understand that this transit stop would not include a park and ride lot. We are fully supportive of this option. A transit stop on campus would provide alternative access options for our students and employees and also for those students who work and/or attend classes at other UH campuses. Due to limited on-campus parking, we would be reluctant to support a park and ride lot unless provisions are made to build, manage, and control vehicular access to such a site at an off-campus location. A logical place to place a park and ride lot would be the U.S. Navy's Drum Storage Property which is adjacent to the campus and in close proximity to the planned transit stop. We understand that this site is currently being viewed to support transit maintenance operations and/or a multi-family housing development project.

In reviewing the proposed transit stops, an alternative option was mentioned which bypassed Leeward Community College entirely. Under this scenario, the plans would call for a pedestrian overpass to be built between the College and the planned Sam's Club transit stop located in Pearl City. We believe that this option would further exacerbate the access issue to the campus, would provide very little incentive

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for students, employees, or our frequent visitors to use the system, and also increase the pedestrian safety issues that already persist along the existing Waiawa and Ala Ike Streets...the only access to campus. Without significant improvements to the current vehicular and pedestrian access route infrastructure, we do not view this option as feasible or cost effective. Any analysis of the cost comparisons with regards to a transit stop at Leeward Community College should take into account the roadway infrastructure needs that would be required. Our assumption would be that a transit stop at the campus...without a park and ride lot...would be far more cost effective then building a pedestrian overpass to the campus and providing the roadway/pedestrian infrastructure needs that would be required. In our estimation, an on-campus transit stop would also have the added benefit of soliciting far more ridership and transit supporters as well.

In addition to supporting the transit stop on campus, the College is aggressively working with the Department of Transportation (DOT) in developing a Second Access Road to campus. As previously mentioned, the only access to the College is via Farrington Highway – Waiawa Street – Ala Ike Street. Presently, DOT is in the planning and preliminary engineering phase of this project (the Wilson Okamoto Corporation has been retained as consulting planners and engineers for this project). Three alternatives have been proposed and public comments are currently being reviewed. All three alternatives would connect to the Waipio Point Access Road via a roadway that would run makai of the U.S. Navy Drum Storage site along the Middle Loch of Pearl Harbor. Given that this site is under consideration for transit maintenance operations and a possible future housing development (i.e. more mass transit patrons), we encourage you to review the proposed alternatives and work together with the City engineers on the design and location of the Second Access Road. The Second Access Road project would seem to be a mutually beneficial project for all public entities involved...the DOT, Leeward Community College, and the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project.

We respectfully submit these comments and ask for your due consideration as deliberations and assessments of the mass transportation options for Oahu continue to be developed. If you have any questions or require further clarification of our statements, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Mark Lane
Director, Administrative Services
Leeward Community College

c: State Senator Clarence Nishihara
Pearl City Neighborhood Board
Chancellor Peter Quigley, Leeward Community College